

Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent

PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501
406.444.5643
In-State Toll-free: 1.888.231.9393
TTY Users: 406.444.0235
opi.mt.gov

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
STATE OF MONTANA

Putting Montana Students First **A+**



April 8, 2020

Governor Steve Bullock
Office of the Governor
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Bullock,

School leaders, teachers, students, and parents have done a tremendous job of responding to the unprecedented circumstances that their communities face in light of the COVID-19 outbreak in Montana. The alternative education plans that local trustees have certified to your office are being carried out with fidelity, ensuring that students receive equitable access to alternative education and nutrition services.

As you consult with health officials in two-week decision-making timeframes, school leaders and parents are asking for the ability to plan in a consistent manner for the short remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Each district's school year calendar is different.

I request that you give local districts flexibility in how they finish out the academic year as you consider when to open school doors again. If the decision is made to reopen schools before a district's academic year is complete, I request that you allow school districts the option to continue operating under the alternative plans that have been approved or a mix of alternative learning with a partial return to school buildings, without penalty to the district.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your response to this request and I am available to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Elsie Arntzen
Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction